

SPA COVER SUPPORT ASSEMBLY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to spas normally associated with swimming pools and positioned adjacent thereto, and in particular, for an adjustable support assembly for positioning a flexible, waterproof cover over the spa during the off season.

RELATED APPLICATIONS

Applicant claims the benefit of provisional application Serial No. 60/395,770 filed July 13, 2002.

2. Description of the Prior Art

It is increasingly popular when installing a swimming pool to simultaneously install a spa adjacent to the pool. The spa is generally round or rectangular in nature providing a sitting area for accommodating several individuals. The spa would have pump driven water jets for providing relaxing agitation of the water in the spa. The spa may be fabricated out of one piece fiberglass or polymeric material, or it may be fabricated from concrete or other suitable material. In many models, the spa does not have a drain associated therewith and in other models there is a drain. In

either instance, it is desirable to provide a cover for the spa during the off season.

In those climates where an outdoor pool and spa are used during the late spring, summer, and early fall when the temperature is optimum, it is desirable to provide a cover for the spa during the off season or winter months. It is also desirable, particularly with respect to one piece fiberglass or polymeric spas to prevent the spa from accumulating water and freezing up and possibly cracking and damaging the spa, necessitating its complete replacement. In addressing the freezing problem with respect to a fiberglass or polymeric spa, one of the solutions was to completely drain the spa during the off season and to provide a cover for the spa to attempt to prevent water and moisture from accumulating during the winter months and possibly freezing. Another solution was to add a sufficient quality of anti-freeze to the water in the spa and to then cover the spa with a cover.

The practice in the past has been to have a rather unwieldy solid cover slightly larger than the diameter of the spa placed over the spa and secured during the off season. This would attempt to prevent moisture, snow and rain water from accumulating in the spa after it had been drained for the off season or had been diluted with anti-freeze. The problem with the present covers is

that it was rather unwieldy and cumbersome and storage presented a problem when it was not needed, since typically, spas are approximately 90 to 100 inches in diameter. Flexible covers have been utilized, but their tendency is to sag, allowing moisture accumulation and leakage into the spa.

Applicant manufactures winterized pool covers and has developed a spa cover support which would allow the spa to be covered with a flexible, water proof cover, yet elevate the cover to provide drain off of snow and rain water so as to prevent accumulation of water and moisture in the well of a fiberglass or polymeric spa, and thus prevent possible cracking of a drained spa.

#### OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide for a novel support for a spa cover to prevent the accumulation of moisture in the spa during the off season.

A further object of the present invention is to provide for a novel support for a spa cover which is adjustable to accommodate spas of varying degrees of depth.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide for a novel support for a spa cover which can be easily assembled and disassembled for storage.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide

for a novel support for a spa cover which when not in use as a support for a spa cover, can be used as an in-pool or on deck drink holder with ice chamber to keep drinks cold.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A support for a flexible, water-proof spa cover which permits drainage of snow and moisture away from the spa during the off season, the support having a base member capable of being weighted, a top member generally circular in configuration for the elevated support of a flexible water resistant spa cover, the base member and top member being in communication with each other by means of telescoping sleeve members having alignable apertures for receipt of a locking pin so as to provide for adjustment of the height of the support from the well of the spa to a distance above the edge coping of the spa so as to provide for a sloping surface of said flexible, water-proof spa cover for snow and water run off.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and other objects of the present invention will become apparent particularly when taken in light of the following illustrations wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a typical spa normally associated with an adjacent swimming pool;

Figure 2 is an exploded side view of the support of the

present invention;

Figure 3 is a side view of the assembled support of the present invention;

Figure 4 is a partial cutaway view of Figure 1 illustrating the support member, spa and flexible, water-proof spa cover; and

Figure 5 is a top view of an alternative embodiment of an upper support of the present invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a spa 10. It is normally fabricated or molded out of one piece construction of fiberglass or suitable polymeric material. In the embodiment illustrated, the periphery 12 of the spa is round, although spas may also come in different configurations. Spa 10 has a step 14 for entering and exiting the spa, a seat portion 16 for users to sit, and a well portion 18 where users typically extend their feet. About the side walls 20 of the spa 10 are a plurality of water jets 22 to provide the agitation action of the water within the spa. The periphery 12 of the spa is formed with a spill way 24 which provides communication between the spa and the swimming pool (not shown) which is normally positioned adjacent the spa.

When the off season commences, the user must empty or drain the spa or add anti-freeze to prevent freezing and possible

cracking of the spa wall. A cover over the spa is also desirable. Typically this meant a solid fiberglass or polymeric cover of a diameter slightly greater than the spa so that it could be placed over the spa. Typically these covers would have a slope or gradation from the center to the outer periphery, the center being positioned directly over the well portion 18 of the spa. This allowed precipitation in the form of water or snow to drain off of the spa beyond the periphery of the spa.

A typical spa of the type illustrated in Figure 1 would be approximately 8 feet in diameter. Therefore the owner would have to have a cover of the type used in the prior art of a diameter of approximately 8 feet or greater in order to insure no moisture or precipitation enters the spa 10 during the off season. These covers were normally solid, therefore, the owner would have to store essentially an 8 foot diameter or greater disk somewhere for the duration of the useable season for the spa. This oftentimes proves cumbersome. The alternative was a flexible cover which sagged into the spa and collected moisture.

Figures 2 and 3 represent an exploded side view of the spa cover support assembly of the present invention and a side view of the assembled spa cover support assembly. The spa cover support assembly has a base member 30 having a generally flat lower surface

32 for engagement with the floor of the well portion 18 of the spa

10. The base member defines a reservoir 34 accessed by a sealable port 36 to allow sand or other suitable weighted material to be placed into the reservoir to provide stability to the spa cover support assembly. On the upper surface 38 of base member 30 there is a receiving bore 40. Positioned in receiving bore 40 is a first upright tubular member 44 having lower end 46 and upper end 48. First upright tubular member 44 may be either frictionally or mechanically engaged in receiving bore 40. The lower end 46 of first upright tubular member 44 is designed to be slidably received in receiving bore 40 and maintained in position either by frictional engagement or mechanical engagement. First upright tubular member 44 has at least one pair of apertures 50 in vertical alignment approximate its upper end 48.

Slidably telescopingly engageable within the upper end 48 of first upright tubular member 44 is a telescoping member 52 having a lower end 54 and an upper end 56. Telescoping member 52 is formed with a plurality of apertures 58 in vertical alignment between lower end 54 and upper end 56. As will be more fully discussed hereafter, telescoping member 52 is adjusted in height relative to first upright tubular member 44 to adjust the height of the spa cover support assembly and is held in place by a locking

pin 60 which would extend through aligned apertures in telescoping member 52 and first upright tubular member 44.

Removably mounted on upper end 56 of telescoping member 52 is the cover support member 62. Cover support member 62 is defined by an upper surface 64 and a lower surface 66. There is formed in lower surface 66, a receiving bore 68 for the frictional or mechanical engagement of a depending member 70 sized to slidably frictionally engage upper end 56 of telescoping member 52 so as to position the upper surface 64 of cover support member 62 at a height above the height of the periphery 12 of spa 10. Depending member 70 may be either frictionally or mechanically engaged in receiving bore 68 or alternatively, it could be formed integrally with the cover support member 62. Cover support member 62 is illustrated with an arcuate upper surface 64 which merges with a generally planar lower surface 66. Cover support member 62 must be of sufficient horizontal cross section and shaped so as not to provide a sharp or pointed surface to the subsequent spa cover to be placed there over. It therefore could be formed in a variety of geometrical forms as long as it provided stability to the spa cover and did not present an edge or surface which might cut or tear the installed spa cover.

Figure 4 is a cutaway view of the spa 10 of Figure 1. In this

illustration, the spa cover support assembly has been positioned in the well portion 18 of a drained spa 10 and cover support member 62 and telescoping tubular member 52 have been adjusted with relationship to first upright tubular member 44 to position the upper surface 64 of cover support member 62 above the height of the periphery 12 of the spa 10. In this configuration, a flexible, water-proof spa cover 70 can be positioned over spa 10, spa cover 70 being centrally supported by the spa cover support assembly at a height greater than the periphery 12 of the spa 10. The spa cover 70 would be secured to the deck or concrete 72 with a plurality of tie downs 74 commonly used in the trade.

Figure 5 is a top view of cover support member 62 with an alternative embodiment. The spa cover support assembly discussed with respect to Figures 2, 3, and 4 can be easily disassembled and stored when not needed during the spa season. This alone overcomes the cumbersome task of finding storage for the disk member of the prior art. However, with slight modifications, the spa cover support assembly of the present invention could find active use during the spa season with no need to disassemble for storage. This embodiment as illustrated in Figure 5 comprises the forming of the cover support member 62 with a plurality of recesses 76 formed in its upper surface 64. These recesses would be dimensioned to

accept plastic cups and there could even be a centrally disposed larger recess 78 for accepting or positioning of ice. Since the base member 30 is weighted, the spa cover support assembly once adjusted for height, could serve as a patio table, or still further, since it is weighted at its base member 30, once adjusted for height, it could be utilized as a table positioned within the adjacent swimming pool at the shallow end.

While the present invention has been described with respect to the exemplary embodiments thereof, it will be recognized by those of ordinary skill in the art that many modifications or changes can be achieved without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Therefore it is manifestly intended that the invention be limited only by the scope of the claims and the equivalence thereof.